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ANNE RICE'S SERVANT OF THE BONES



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Azriel, the Servant of the Bones, saved the scholar Jonathan in his remote cabin one wintry night. He then tells him a tale of ancient Babylon, gods, kings, and secret rites. Able to see the great god of Babylon, Marduk, Azriel is sentenced to a terrible fate by his elders. But even he doesn't know the horror that awaits him in a secret chamber, or what the centuries of serving one master after another will turn him into...until he ends up in modern day New York City.



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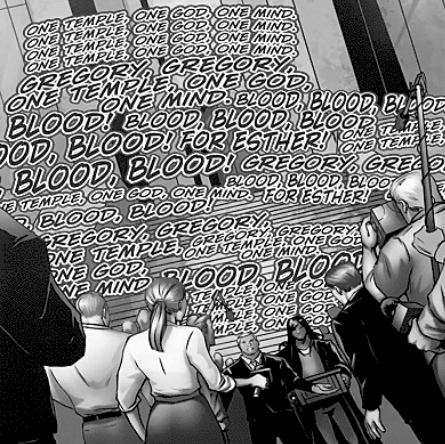
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"I LOOKED RIGHT INTO THE BLARING LIGHTS AND SCREAMING FACES. I SHOOK AWAY THE MANTLE OF SADNESS. THE CRIES DEAFENED ME."



BLOOD FOR ESTHER?

GREGORY,
WHO KILLED
HER?

GREGORY,
WHO IS THIS
WITH YOU?

SIR, ARE YOU
A MEMBER OF
THE TEMPLE?

TELL US
WHO YOU
ARE!

GREGORY,
WHAT WILL THE
CHURCH DO?

"IT WAS A
BABBLE OF
PEOPLE."



INDEED,
THEY DO
SEE YOU.



THE MURDER
OF ESTHER WAS
ONLY THEIR
WARNING.

THEY HAVE LET
US KNOW THAT THE
TIME HAS COME WHEN
ANY RIGHTEOUS
PERSON WILL BE
DESTROYED!

DON'T GIVE
THEM AN
EXCUSE!

NO EXCUSE
TO ENTER OUR
CHURCHES OR
OUR HOMES!

THEY COME
CLOTHED
IN MANY
DISGUISES!

ESTHER
WAS THE
LAMB!



AZRIEL,
COME
INSIDE.



"WE STOOD IN THE
CAPITAL OF THE WORLD.
GREGORY SPARKLED
WITH THE SURETY
OF POWER.



"ALARM BELLS CLANGED.
THE CROWD HAS PUSHED
IN ON THE TOWER.

"I WAS MADLY
EXHILARATED,
ALIVE IN THE
MIDST OF ALL
THIS."



"WE WERE THRUST
INSIDE AN ELEVATOR.



"I REALIZED WE WERE
COMPLETELY ALONE, I SAW
MYSELF IN THE GLASS AS
WE BEGAN TO RISE.



"WE STARED AT
EACH OTHER IN A
FLOATING CABIN
OF MIRRORED
LIGHT.

"WE COULD HAVE
BEEN BROTHERS.



"WE WERE HIGHER THAN
THE MIGHTIEST ZIGURAT,
CASTLE, OR FOREST.

"WE WERE IN THE REALM
OF THE AIRY SPIRITS."

ESTHER... OH...
ESTHER...

MY HUMBLE
ABODE.

IT'S THE
MOTHER CRYING,
ISN'T IT? THE
MOTHER OF
ESTHER.



WE
SHOULD GO
TO HER.

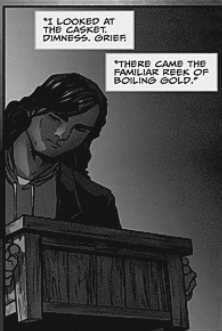
WHY
WOULD WE
DO THAT?

BECAUSE
SHE'S CRYING.

I WANT TO
TELL HER THAT
ESTHER DIDN'T
SUFFER, THAT I
WAS THERE.

ESTHER'S
SPIRIT WENT UP
SO LIGHT IT WAS
LIKE AIR ITSELF
IN THE PATHWAY
TO HEAVEN.

I WANT
TO TELL
HER.



"I LOOKED AT
THE CASKET.
DIMNESS, GRIEF.

"THERE CAME THE
FAMILIAR REEK OF
BOILING GOLD."



COME TO MY
PARLOR. TALK TO
ME. YOUR WORDS
WON'T MEAN
ANYTHING TO
RACHEL ANYWAY.

I WANT TO
SEE HER AND
COMFORT
HER.

WE'LL
TALK TO HER,
I PROMISE
YOU.

SHE'S STILL
CRYING, ISN'T
SHE?



SHE'LL
CRY UNTIL
SHE DIES.



"WE PASSED
NUMEROUS DOORS.
ONE LAY OPEN.

"IT WAS HER
ROOM. SHE
WAS IN THERE.

"I PEERED IN
RUDELY, THE SIGHT
AMAZED ME.

"SHE WAS
SURROUNDED BY
NURSES, HER HAIR
SILVERY, ALMOST
DECORATED WITH
GREATER AGE.

"BUT SHE WAS
NOT OLD.

"SHE SAW ME."

GREGORY!

"HE WALKED ON.

"I COULD NOT
BELIEVE HOW FAR
WE WERE ABOVE
THE EARTH.

"THE NIGHT
CAUGHT ME WITH
ALL ITS TIMELESS
SWEETNESS."

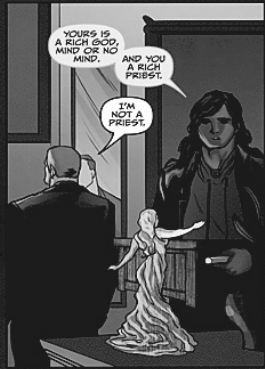


"WE SEEMED TO BE DRIFTING IN THIS PALACE, COMFORTED BY THE CITY IN AN ILLUSION."

"I DISGUISSED MY DELIGHT, MY WEAKNESS, MY HUNGER FOR IT."

TELL ME, GREGORY, WHAT IS THE TEMPLE OF THE MIND THAT ITS HIGH PRIEST LIVES IN THIS SPLENDOR?

ARE YOU A THIEF, A CHARLATAN, AS YOUR GRANDFATHER SAID?



YOURS IS A RICH GOD, MIND OR NO MIND.

AND YOU A RICH PRIEST.

I'M NOT A PRIEST.



"HIS EXCITEMENT WAS PALPABLE. HE WANTED TO DRINK ALL THE KNOWLEDGE HE COULD FROM ME."

WHO CALLED YOU? WHO BROUGHT YOU OUT OF THE BONES?

YOU HAVE TO TELL ME, I AM THE MASTER NOW.

"I FELT NO WEAKENING IN MYSELF AS I RESISTED HIM."

"WHAT IF THE WORLD WAS MY MASTER NOW?"



IT WOULD BE NOTHING FOR ME TO KILL YOU, DON'T TAKE SUCH A FOOLISH TACK.

MAY I SET DOWN THE BONES HERE, ON YOUR TABLE?



"I FELT A RIPPLE OF SENSATION, I SAW A FIRE, NOT OF THE WORLD, BUT OF THE GODS."

"WHAT IF EACH AND EVERY HUMAN BEING WAS MY MASTER NOW?"

"I DID NOT WANT TO BE TAKEN BEFORE I UNDERSTOOD THIS."



"THE BONES WERE AS BRILLIANT AS THEY HAD BEEN THE DAY I DIED."

"THE DAY I DIED, AM I TO REMEMBER EVERYTHING NOW? IS THAT PART OF THE PLAN?"

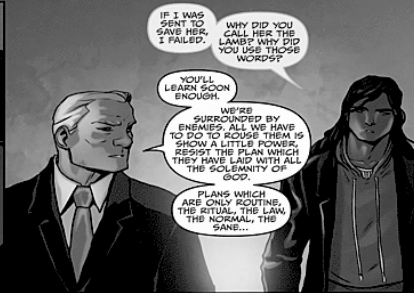
"WHEN WAS IT? WHAT MADE YOU A GHOST? WHAT PLAN?"



"I DON'T KNOW THOSE ANSWERS. I WOULDN'T BOTHER WITH YOU IF I DID. THE REBBE TOLD YOU MORE THAN I KNOW."

"NOT BOTHER WITH ME! DON'T YOU SEE THAT IF THERE IS A PLANE, EVEN GREATER THAN THE ONE I DEvised, YOU ARE PART OF IT?"

"HOW COULD ESTHER HAVE SEEN YOU? WHEN DID YOU FIRST COME?"



"IF I WAS SENT TO SAVE HER, I FAILED."

"WHY DID YOU CALL HER THE LAMB? WHY DID YOU USE THOSE WORDS?"

"YOU'LL LEARN SOON ENOUGH."

"WE'RE SURROUNDED BY ENEMIES. ALL WE HAVE TO DO TO ROUSE THEM IS SHOW A LITTLE POWER, RESIST THE PLAN WHICH THEY HAVE LAID WITH ALL THE SOLEMNITY OF GOD."

"PLANS WHICH ARE ONLY ROUTINE, THE RITUAL, THE LAW, THE NORMAL, THE SAME..."



"...I HAVE GONE AGAINST THEM AND THEY WOULD COME AGAINST ME. ONLY I'M TOO POWERFUL! I HAVE DREAMS THAT DWARF THEIR PETTY EVIL!"



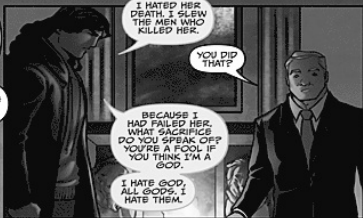
"MY, BUT YOU SPEAK WITH A SILKEN TONGUE."

"YOU GIVE SO MUCH IN YOUR WORDS. WHY ME?"



BECAUSE YOU'RE A SPIRIT, A GOD, AN ANGEL SENT TO ME. YOU WITNESSED HER DEATH, YOU CAME WHEN SHE DIED. DON'T YOU SEE?

YOU CAME AS IF A GOD CAME TO RECEIVE A SACRIFICE!



I HATED HER DEATH. I SLEW THE MEN WHO KILLED HER.

YOU DID THAT?

BECAUSE I HAD FAILED HER. WHAT SACRIFICE DO YOU SPEAK OF? YOU'RE A FOOL IF YOU THINK I'M A GOD.

I HATE GOD, ALL GODS. I HATE THEM.

"IF HE WAS GUILTY OF KILLING HIS DAUGHTER, HE GAVE NO CLUE.

"I SMILED, THEN...

"...I WAS GLAD I COULD NOT SEE THIS MYSELF. I FELT SORRY FOR HIM."

WHY DID YOU CALL HER THE LAMB? WHY DID THE REBBE SAY YOU KILLED HER?

AZRIEL, WHATEVER HAPPENS AFTER, WHATEVER HAPPENS, THE WORLD IS OURS. THE WORLD, AZRIEL.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

STOP IT!

I MEAN THE WORLD AS ALEXANDER THE GREAT MEANT THE WORLD TO BE. NO ONE HAS THE FORCE OF ALEXANDER. NO ONE DARES KILL LIKE PETER THE GREAT KILLED.

THE WORLD IS SO FILLED WITH WONDERS, BUT NO ONE HAS THEIR POWER!

"I HAD CONTROL OF IT. I FELT PROUD AND WICKED SUDDENLY."

YOU HAVE LEADERS, YOU HAVE TALK, YOU HAVE THE RICH BEING KIND TO THE POOR. YOU HAVE MEN WORLDWIDE WHO FEAR EVIL AND WANT GOODNESS.

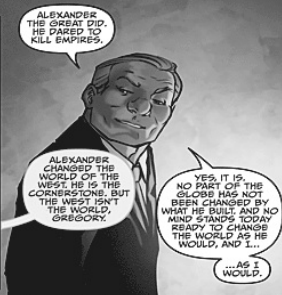
WE HAVE MADNESS!



IS THIS THE MISSION OF YOUR CHURCH TO GAIN CONTROL OF THE WORLD? IS THAT WHAT DRIVES YOU AS THE OLD MAN ASKED? YOU WANT THAT POWER?

I WANT TO CHANGE EVERYTHING.

WHO REALLY CHANGED THE WORLD? WHO CHANGED IT MORE THAN ANY OTHER MAN?



ALEXANDER THE GREAT DID. HE DARED TO KILL EMPIRES.

ALEXANDER CHANGED THE WORLD OF THE WEST. HE IS THE CORNERSTONE. BUT THE WEST ISN'T THE WORLD, GREGORY.

YES, IT IS. NO PART OF THE GLOBE HAS NOT BEEN CHANGED BY WHAT HE BUILT. AND NO MIND STANDS TODAY READY TO CHANGE THE WORLD AS HE WOULD, AND I...

...AS I WOULD.



WHY ARE YOU TESTING ME?

YOU'VE BEEN SENT TO ME. DON'T YOU SEE? YOU'VE BEEN SENT ON THE EVE OF THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE WORLD. YOU WERE A SIGN.

AS WAS KING CYRUS OF OLD.



SPEAK OF ALEXANDER IF YOU WILL, BUT DON'T SPEAK OF CYRUS. YOU KNOW NOTHING OF THOSE TIMES!

DO YOU?

I WANT TO KNOW WHY I AM HERE NOW. I DON'T ACCEPT YOUR PROPHECIES. DID YOU KILL ESTHER? DID YOU SEND THOSE MEN TO KILL HER?



I LOVED HER. I DIDN'T WANT FOR HER TO DIE. BUT THE GREATER GOOD CALLED FOR HER DEATH.

"THAT WAS A
BRITTLE LIE."

WHAT WOULD
YOU DO IF I
TOLD YOU, YES,
I DID KILL
ESTHER?

FOR THE
WORLD, I KILLED
HER. FOR THE WORLD
THAT WILL RISE FROM
THE ASHES, THE WORLD
THAT IS KILLING ITSELF
WITH SMALL DREAMS
AND SMALL MEN AND
SMALL EMPIRES?

I SWORE
I'D AVENGE
HER DEATH.

NOW I
KNOW YOU'RE
GUILTY, I'LL
KILL YOU.

BUT NOT
NOW.

YOU THINK
YOU CAN?

OF COURSE.
I HAVE KILLED
THOSE WHO HAVE
CALLED ME
BEFORE.

BUT I DIDN'T
CALL YOU! IT WAS
THE PLAN, IT WAS
THE WORLD! IT WAS
THE DESIGN! YOU
WERE SENT TO ME
BECAUSE I NEED
YOU, AND CAN
USE YOU.

YOU WILL
DO WHAT I
WILL YOU
TO DO.

"IT WAS THE WORLD.
BUT WAS IT TO BE
GREGORY'S WORLD?"

YOU MUST
HELP ME. I
DON'T NEED
TO BE YOUR
MASTER BUT I
NEED YOU!
I NEED YOU TO
WITNESS, TO
UNDERSTAND.

YOU LOVED
ESTHER,
DIDN'T YOU?

VERY MUCH.
BUT SHE HAD
NO VISION, AND
NEITHER DOES
HER MOTHER,
RACHEL.

THAT'S WHY
YOU'VE COME.
YOU WERE MEANT
TO APPEAR BEFORE
ME. THAT'S WHY YOU
WERE GIVEN TO
OUR PEOPLE.

YOU ARE
THE WITNESS.
THE WHO WILL
UNDERSTAND
EVERYTHING."

YOU HAVE
YOUR CHURCH.
WHAT DOES
ESTHER HAVE TO
DO WITH IT?
WHAT AM I TO
WITNESS?



YOU WERE
MEANT FOR ME.
YOU'RE WORTHY OF
ME, MY TIME, MY
BRILLIANCE, MY
EFFORT.

ALL THOSE
MEN WHO KEPT
YOU THROUGH
GENERATIONS. IT
WAS FOR ME.

YOU HAVE
THE PRIDE AND
DECISIVENESS
OF A KING.

OF COURSE
I DO. WHAT DO
YOUR MASTERS
USUALLY SAY TO
YOU? WHAT DO YOU
REMEMBER?



NOTHING. I
WOULDN'T BE WITH
YOU IF I COULD
REMEMBER.

I ONLY STAY
WITH YOU NOW
TO REMEMBER
AND TO KNOW. I
SHOULD KILL
YOU NOW.



NO, THAT
WON'T HAPPEN.
IF GOD WANTED
ME TO DIE,
ANYONE COULD
DO IT.

YOU DON'T
REALIZE THE
SCALE OF MY
DREAMS.



I AM NOT
YOURS.

I DON'T
WANT TO KILL
YOU WITHOUT
KNOWING WHY
YOU HAD ESTHER
MURDERED.

I AM
NOT YOURS, NOT
MEANT FOR YOU.
NOT NECESSARILY
MEANT FOR...

...ANYTHING.



"SOMEWHERE
THE MOTHER WAS
CRYING AGAIN."

DO AS
I SAY.

I MAY NOT
KILL YOU, BUT
I MAY LEAVE
YOU.

YOU CAN'T!
EVERYTHING IS IN
PLACE AND NOW YOU
COME, THE RIGHT
HAND OF GOD.

DO YOU
DESPISE YOUR
ORIGINS, THE
EVIL YOU'VE
DONE?

I DO.

THEN YOU SHOULD
WELCOME THE WORLD
I PLACE IN YOUR HANDS.
YOU ARE HERE TO TEACH
US AFTER THE LAST
DAYS. I SEE IT.

WHEN
THE HELL ARE
MORTAL MEN
GOING TO SHUT
UP ABOUT THE
LAST DAYS?

DO
YOU KNOW
HOW MANY
CENTURIES MEN
HAVE YAMMERED
ABOUT THE
LAST DAYS?

BUT I KNOW
THE DATES. I'VE
CHOSEN THEM.
YOU'LL LEARN.

"HAD I EVER SEEN A
MASTER MORE EXCITED
THAN GREGORY WAS?
MORE PROUD, MORE
HOT FOR GLORY?"

"I COULDN'T KILL
HIM, NOT YET. I
WANTED TO KNOW
WHAT HE HAD TO
TEACH. I HAD TO
BE CERTAIN OF
HIS LIMITS."

YOU FEAR
ME SUDDENLY.
WHY?

I DON'T. I'VE JUST
NEVER SERVED A KING.
I'VE SEEN THEM. I
SAW ALEXANDER...

YOU
DID?

...I WAS THERE
IN BABYLON WHEN
HE DIED. YOU WERE
BOTH FULL OF
DREAMS, AND YOU
DO BURN BRIGHT
LIKE HE DID.

I FIGHT
YOU BUT... I
THINK I COULD
LOVE YOU.

YOU ALREADY LOVE
ME. ALMOST EVERYONE
WHO SEES ME LOVES
ME, EVEN MY
GRANDFATHER.

YOU THINK
SO? HE KNEW I
WAS THERE WHEN
HE SOLD YOU
THE BONES.

I WAS IN
THE ROOM AND
VISIBLE. WHEN HE
SAW ME, THAT WAS
WHEN HE AGREED
TO TELL YOU WHAT
YOU WANTED TO
KNOW.

HE KNEW
I COULD
HURT YOU.

FOR A
ZADDIK TO SEE A
DEMON AND KNOW
THAT DEMON CAN
DESTROY YOU, AND
PASS THAT DEMON
ON TO YOU—

YOU'VE
MADE YOUR
POINT.

SO HE
DESPISES
ME.

RIGHT. THE REDBE WAS MERELY THE INSTRUMENT. HE HAD NO IDEA IT WAS FOR ME THAT HE KEPT THE BONES.

ESTHER GAVE ME THE LINK AS SHE DIED. HER WORDS SENT ME TO HIM TO FIND YOU.

YOU ARE DESTINED FOR ME. WORTHY OF ME.

ESTHER'S DEATH WAS INEVITABLE, NECESSARY. I DIDN'T REALIZE IT MYSELF.

SHE WAS THE LAMB. SHE BROUGHT YOU TO ME.

YOU WOULD SEDUCE ME TO LOVE YOU, WOULDN'T YOU?

I LOVE WHEN I SEE MY GRAND SCHEME EVER EXPANDING. I WANT THE WORLD.

I HAVE TO HAVE IT. I HAVE TO HAVE THE LOVE AND RECOGNITION OF MILLIONS. I LOVE IT. I LOVE WHEN THE CAMERA'S SHINE ON ME.

WELL, MAYBE YOU WON'T GET IT FROM ME. BEFORE I SAW ESTHER DIE I WAS TIRED OF SERVING MASTERS.

YOU SAW YOUR OWN MURDER. PERHAPS NOW YOU WILL COME TO SEE THE REASON FOR IT.

LISTEN. YOU MISERABLE CREATURE, I'VE BEEN HERE FOREVER. I SLEEP I DREAM. I WAKE.

I DON'T REMEMBER. MAYBE I WAS MURDERED. MAYBE I WAS NEVER BORN. I'M SICK OF THIS HALF DEATH.

OH, ESTHER. WHO WERE YOU, MY DARLING? WHAT DID YOU WANT OF ME?

YOU ASK THE WRONG PERSON. SHE DOESN'T WANT VENGEANCE. WHAT CAN I DO TO CONVINCE YOU, YOU WERE MEANT FOR ME?

TELL ME WHAT YOU WANT OF ME. WHAT I AM TO WITNESS? WHAT, ANOTHER MURDER?

YES.

"THERE WAS SOMETHING DEEPLY HORRIBLE IN HIM. SOMETHING FIERCELY DESTRUCTIVE I HAD NEVER ENCOUNTERED BEFORE IN ANY HUMAN BEING."

I WON'T SERVE YOU. I WON'T EVEN STAY HERE WITH YOU.

MAYBE YOU ARE NOT WORTHY OF ME. I COULD DESTROY YOU AS OTHERS HAVE.

WHAT ARE YOU TO ME WHEN I WANT THE WHOLE WORLD?

YOU'RE NOTHING!

"HE WAS ABHORRENT TO ME."

"I LOOKED DOWN AT THE GRINNING SKULL THAT STILL HAD ME IN IT SOMEHOW."

YOU WOULDN'T DARE BURN IT.

I WOULD.

"HE HELD OUT A FLAME. IT WAS SO PRETTY. I MEANT IT. I WOULD LET THE BONES BURN. GREGORY WAS HORRIFIED."

NO!

LET ME THROW THEM IN THE FIRE. I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW I'M AFRAID, BUT YOU KNOW WHAT I SUSPECT.

THAT THIS TIME IT DOESN'T MATTER ABOUT THE BONES. BUT THEY HAVE COME TO ME! THEY HAVE COMPLETED THEIR JOURNEY.

"I DIDN'T WANT TO GO INTO DARKNESS AND NOTHINGNESS, BUT I WOULD NOT SERVE HIM."

NO!

HELP ME!
YOU, PLEASE,
HELP ME!

"SHE GAVE OFF A DEEP AND RICH PERFUME OF DEATH AND DECAY. DEATH WAS ALL AROUND HER."

HELP ME
GET OUT
OF HERE!



I DON'T
WANT TO DIE
HERE.

HE IS KILLING
ME, POISONING MY
DEATH BY HIS
OWN CLOCK.

SHE'S SICK.
SHE DOESN'T
KNOW WHAT
SHE'S DOING.



PLEASE,
HELP ME.

DAMMIT,
RACHEL. BACK
AWAY FROM
HER, AZRIEL.

NO.

I'LL
HELP YOU,
RACHEL.



AZRIEL!

GOODBYE,
GREGORY. WE'LL
SEE IF I RETURN
TO YOU AND
THE BONES.

YOU CAN'T
DO THIS!

DON'T
MAKE ME
HURT YOU.



SLAM

"FOR ONE BREATHLESS
SECOND I THOUGHT I
KILLED HIM, BUT HE
WAS ONLY DAZED."



"THIS WAS
OUR MOMENT
TO ESCAPE,
RACHEL
KNEW IT AND
SO DID I."

YOU WILL
BE GLAD YOU
HELPED ME, I
PROMISE YOU.
HE WAS KILLING
ME.

WHO ARE
YOU, AZRIEL?
I HAVE HEARD
THAT NAME.

"SHE HAD THE EYES
OF HER DAUGHTER. BIG
AND EXTRAORDINARY."



WHEN YOUR
DAUGHTER
DIED, SHE
SPOKE. DID
THEY TELL
YOU?

AZRIEL,
SERVANT OF
THE BONES.
THAT'S WHAT
SHE SAID.

I AM
HE.

I AM THE ONE
SHE SAW AS SHE LAY
DYING. I COULDN'T
HELP HER, BUT I
CAN HELP YOU.



"MY WORDS STOPPED HER GRIEF BUT I COULDN'T TELL WHAT SHE MADE OF THIS REVELATION OR OF ME."



"AS THE DOORS OPENED WE SAW AN ARMY BROUGHT OUT AGAINST HER."

GET MY CAR NOW.

AND GET OUT OF OUR WAY.

"THEY DIDN'T DARE TO REFUSE."



"CAMERAS APPEARED LIKE GIANT INSECTS. GREAT CLUSTERS OF PEOPLE CRIED IN MOURNING, BOWING TO RACHEL."

COME, MRS. BELKIN. LET HER PASS.

TAKE ME TO MY PLANE, RITCHIE. IT'S WAITING AND I'M GOING.

"HER EYES WERE FOR ALL TIME."

"I PUT MY ARM AROUND HER AND I FELT LOVE FOR HER."

"A TREMENDOUS NEED TO HELP HER."

I'M DYING, OF COURSE.

HE HAS THAT ON HIS SIDE, BUT HE WANTS ME DEAD NOW.

I'M HERE.

WHY DID MY DAUGHTER SAY YOUR NAME? YOU SAW HER DIE?

HER SPIRIT WENT STRAIGHT INTO THE LIGHT. DON'T GRIEVE FOR HER.

I KILLED THE THREE MEN. I AM HERE PARTLY TO AVENGE HER DEATH.



WHY WOULD YOU HAVE BEEN THERE? WHAT WERE YOU DOING WITH GREGORY?

I'M A SPIRIT.

THEN YOU DON'T BELONG TO GREGORY IN ANY WAY?

YOU'RE TELLING ME THIS BODY HERE IS NOT REAL?

NO. YOU SAW ME DEFEY HIM.



*SHE ASTONISHED ME. HER LIPS WERE HOT AND DAMP.

SHE HAD THE PASSION OF A YOUNG WOMAN, DYING OR NOT.

WHY DID YOU DO THAT?

WHATEVER YOU ARE, WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER. I TRUST YOU.

*SHE GAVE A TERRIBLE OUTCRY OF GRIEF.

*I FELT A DEEP PANG OF DESIRE FOR HER.

*I LOVED HER AND HER DAUGHTER, BECAUSE THEY WERE GOOD. PEOPLE HAD DONE CRUELTY TO THEM AND IT MADE ME WANT TO HURT.



*SHE TOLD ME OF ESTHER'S FIGHT WITH GREGORY. SHE WAS DRUGGED BUT IT HAD TO DO WITH HIS BROTHER, NATHAN.

AND SHE KNEW GREGORY HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH HER DAUGHTER'S DEATH.



GET OFF THE GROUND AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. TAKE ME HOME. MIAMI.

I COULDN'T TAKE MY EYES OFF HER. I WANTED HER.

YOU ARE HUMAN.

I WILL PROVE TO YOU THAT I'M A SPIRIT.

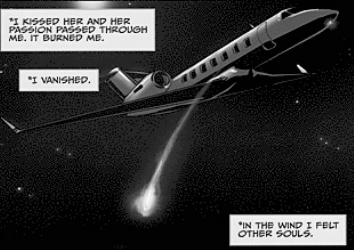
I'LL FIND OUT WHAT GREGORY IS UP TO. I'LL LEAVE YOU NOW AND COME BACK.



WHERE ARE WE GOING?
MIAMI? I WILL MEET YOU
THERE, AND I WILL BRING
YOU THE SCARF EOTHER
WAS WEARING.

HOW DO YOU
KNOW ABOUT
THAT? IT'S IN HER
ROOM IN THE
TEMPLE.

IN A
GESTURE OF
LOVE I WILL
BRING IT TO
YOU.



"I KISSED HER AND HER
PASSION PASSED THROUGH
ME. IT BURNED ME.

"I VANISHED.

"IN THE WIND I FELT
OTHER SOULS.



"I CALLED TO THE BONES
AND THE LIGHTS OF NEW
YORK CITY SPREAD OUT
BEFORE ME. THE BONES
WERE BEFORE ME, TINY,
DISTANT, AND GOLDEN.

"I COULD HEAR
GREGORY'S VOICE.

"I REALIZED FOR THE FIRST
TIME THAT THE BUILDING
ITSELF WAS THE TEMPLE
OF THE MIND OF GOD. IT
THROBBED WITH PEOPLE.



"THE BONES LAY IN
THE VERY MIDDLE
OF A ROOM.

"MEN SURROUNDED
GREGORY. PHYSICIANS,
LEARNED, HE WAS
TELLING THEM THEY MUST
BE ANALYZED IN EVERY
CONCEIVABLE WAY."

YOU'RE NOT
LISTENING TO ME!
TREAT THIS AS
PRICELESS!



"I APPROACHED THE BONES
AND FELT NOTHING. WAS I
FINISHED WITH THEM NOW?

"WAS MY SOUL
LOCKED WITHIN
THEM?

"GREGORY
KNEW I WAS
THERE.



"HE WAS
PETRIFIED."

BE CAREFUL
WITH THEM!



EVERYTHING
IS GOING
SPLENDIDLY—

SOMETHING
COULD STILL
GO WRONG—

"I BECAME
VISIBLE."



REMEMBER, I AM WATCHING YOU.

WHEN YOU GIVE ME YOUR REPORTS, TELL ME EXACTLY HOW THESE BONES CAN BE DESTROYED.



"I LAUGHED. I HAD ACCOMPLISHED MY PURPOSE."



LET ME KNOW THE OUTCOME OF YOUR TESTS.

"I LET THEM STUDY ME FOR A MOMENT.

"THEY REGARDED THEIR SCIENCE AS OMNIPOTENT.

"ANYTHING I DID THEY WOULD PERCEIVE AS SCIENCE BEYOND THEIR UNDERSTANDING. THEY WERE MATERIALISTS WHO BEHELD THEIR SCIENCE AS MAGIC.



"I HAD BEEN MADE BY THOSE WHO BELIEVED THAT MAGIC HAD THE POWER OF SCIENCE IF YOU JUST KNEW THE RIGHT WORDS. THE IRONY WAS VERY FUNNY TO ME.

"I SAW HUNDREDS OF OFFICES, LABORATORIES. THEN I CAME TO ESTHER'S ROOM.



"HERE SHE HAD SLEPT, DREAMT.

"I WOUND THE SCARF IN MY HAND, DAZZLED THAT I WAS FORMED AND ANSWERABLE ONLY TO MYSELF.



"THEN I WAS IN THE FRESH NIGHT AIR AGAIN.

"I PICTURED RACHEL. I FELT CLOSE TO HER.

"SHE MOVED THROUGH THE NIGHT AS SWIFTLY AS I DID.

"I FOLLOWED HER PLANE. IT LED ME LIKE THE TINY FIREFLY IN THE DARK."



"IN MIAMI THE WARM AIR WAS GRAND, EXHILARATING. I ALMOST CRIED FOR THE SWEETNESS OF IT.

"I COULD SEE RACHEL'S BUILDING ON THE HILL.

"BUT AROUND IT, THE SEA STRETCHED ON FOREVER. DREAMY, BEAUTIFUL WATER.

"I LOVED THIS WORLD.

"I WENT TO HER."

IT'S ONLY ME, I'VE COME BACK. I SAW GREGORY. KNOW WHAT HE'S UP TO.

THAT'S THE SCARF THAT WAS ON RACHEL'S BED.

I HAVE NEVER FAINTED IN MY LIFE. BUT I THINK I MIGHT NOW.

BUT IF YOU NEED TO FAINT, I'LL CARRY YOU.

DO YOU BELIEVE ME NOW?

TAKE ME TO BED.

"THE PLACE WAS FULL OF THE SCENT OF FLOWERS."

DON'T BE AFRAID.

HOLD ME. BE WITH ME.

"I HAD TO HAVE
HER. I HAD TO
MAKE HER HAPPY.

"IF I LOST ALL
POWER IN HER
ARMS, SO BE IT."

LOVE
ME.

"IT WAS A LUSCIOUS
KISS, FULL OF PASSION
AND UTTER YIELDING."

UNDRESS ME,
PLEASE.

"MY BODY
WAS AN
ENGINE OF
DESIRE."

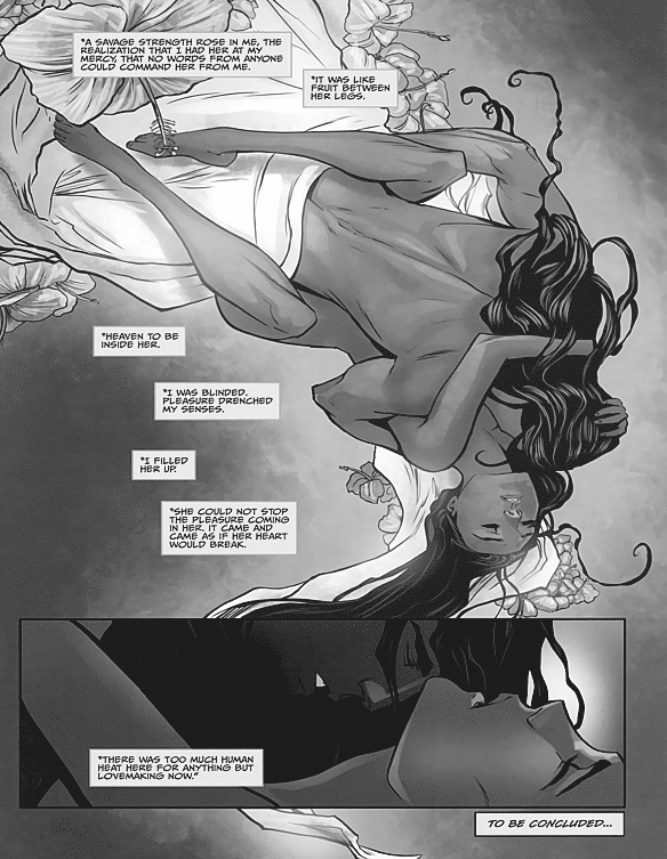
"THERE WAS THE
SMELL OF DEATH,
RISING SWEET LIKE
A CRUSHED LILY."

"IT WAS NOT
THAT DEATH
ATTRACTED ME."

"BUT IT MADE HER
MORE PRECIOUS,
SOMETHING TO BE
LOST IN A MOMENT."

YOU ARE
SPLENDID.

"HER BODY WAS LIKE
A YOUNG GIRL'S, PINK
AND FIRM."



"A SAVAGE STRENGTH ROSE IN ME, THE
REALIZATION THAT I HAD HER AT MY
MERCY, THAT NO WORDS FROM ANYONE
COULD COMMAND HER FROM ME.

"IT WAS LIKE
FRUIT BETWEEN
HER LEGS.

"HEAVEN TO BE
INSIDE HER.

"I WAS BLINDED.
PLEASURE DRENCHED
MY SENSES.

"I FILLED
HER UP.

"SHE COULD NOT STOP
THE PLEASURE COMING
IN HER. IT CAME AND
CAME AS IF HER HEART
WOULD BREAK.

"THERE WAS TOO MUCH HUMAN
HEAT HERE FOR ANYTHING BUT
LOVEMAKING NOW."

TO BE CONCLUDED...



ANNE RICE'S
SERVANT OF THE BONES
NEXT MONTH!

IDW PUBLISHING IN DECEMBER: COUNTING DOWN

Musings & Hot Mustard from IDW's Director of Retail Marketing, Dirk Wood

DEAR SANTA CLAUS,

It's been a year since I've written, and sure, I was naughty once in a while, but who wasn't? I think that, overall, I've been nice enough to merit a few presents. Yes, I know I'm 41 years old. So what? This is the season of giving. Give me some stuff!

Here's what I want, and don't be a cheapskate; a one-year membership in the jelly of the month club, three pairs of OP shorts, a "Whoof Arted" trucker hat, *Captain Ron* on Blu-Ray, and let's see... what else... oh, yeah! Some books!



First off, see if you can squeeze a copy of John Romita's *The Amazing Spider-Man Artist's Edition* into my stocking! John Romita is the definitive *Spider-Man* artist, and I want to see those pages as they first appeared, on his drawing table!

A few years ago, you gave me the first *30 Days of Night* comic, and



the one-shot that celebrates that amazing milestone?

It blew me away. Years later, you gave me a copy of *Locke & Key*, and it became my obsession. You've never steered me wrong, so I want a copy of *Memorial* #1! This looks like the next big IDW creator-owned hit to me.

And how about all 125 *TRANSFORMERS* comics that IDW has put out? I want them all! Too much to carry? Okay, how about *TRANSFORMERS: The Death of Optimus Prime*,

There's my wish-list, Santa. I know you'll take care of me, you always do. I'll try to save you some cookies this time, too (sorry about last year).

-Dirk



DON'T FORGET... IT'S PHOTO COVER MONTH! COLLECT THEM ALL! TITLES BELOW IN **YELLOW** HAVE A PHOTO COVER!

IDW

DECEMBER RELEASES FROM IDW PUBLISHING

COMICS • COMICS • COMICS • COMICS • COMICS • COMICS • COMICS

30 Days of Night #3
Anne Rice's *Servant of the Bones* #5
Cobra #8
Cold War #3
Dead Rising: Road to Fortune #3
Doctor Who #12
Dungeons & Dragons #14
Dungeons & Dragons: *Drizzt* #5
Eternal Descent, Vol. 2 #2
Ghostbusters #4
G.I. Joe: A Real American Hero #173
G.I. Joe #8
Godzilla: Kingdom of Monsters #10
Godzilla Legends #2
Hawken #2
H.P. Lovecraft: The Dunwich Horror #3
Jurassic Park: Dangerous Games #4
Locke & Key: Clockworks #4
Magic: The Gathering #1
Memorial #1
Monocyte #2
Snake Eyes #8
Star Trek/ Legion of Superheroes #3
Star Trek #4

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles #5
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Micro-Series #2: Michelangelo
Transformers #31
Transformers: The Death of Optimus Prime #125
True Blood: The French Quarter #5
Zombies vs Robots Warbet Treasury Edition



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Infestation: Outbreak TPB
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Jon Sable, Freelance Omnibus, Vol. 2 TPB
Star Trek: The Next Generation:
The Gorn Crisis TPB
Transformers Classics, Vol. 2 TPB

ANNE RICE'S SERVANT OF THE BONES



Azriel continues his tale of dark destiny and betrayal as he learns about Gregory Belkin's horrifying plans for the world, and meets the murdered girl's dying mother, Rachel.

Cover by Renae DeLiz

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